3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

young wife, an Ngoni husband would not normally support her against his own mother. In the case of his child, who was born a member of his family, house and clan, his mother and her circle of senior women had uncontested sway.

The second features of Ngoni social organization which the 'arrival of a new stranger' demonstrated was the women's interest in and capacity for planning and organization. The senior women had no doubt about what steps to take and who should take them, from the time when labour began till after weaning. The preparations for the birth, the receiving of the child, the care of mother and baby after birth, the ritual cleansing of the hut, the presentation of the child to the public—all these acts up to and including weaning were planned with what seemed an elaborate organization when first observed, but wh[illegible]rned out to be standard Ngoni practice. Two particular aspects of this organization stood out as different from the local practices: the provision for artificial feeding of the child, and the role played by nurse girls and women helpers.

The main variants in this pattern arose from three causes: the effect of marriage with women of other ethnic groups who married into Ngoni families and had to accept the pattern of authority imposed by the house organization of Ngoni women. They therefore had to follow in its main lines the procedures we have described for the birth and care of infants. But Ngoni men and women deplored in particular two non-Ngoni elements which were creeping into the conduct of birth and post-natal ceremonies. One was the attitude taken during difficult labour when the women attending to the mother tried to force her to confess to illicit sexual relations which the non-Ngoni believed to be the cause of the delayed birth. The other was the prohibition on a wife putting salt in the food she was cooking while she was menstruating or at any other ritually unclean period. The true Ngoni despised this salt taboo and the women of Ngoni families did not practise it.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

will die. The child is in danger from the illness known as *mdulo* throughout the period from birth until the resumption of intercourse between its parents. It is not until after this ceremony, known as 'taking up the child' [33] that the mystical link between man, wife, and child is broken and the man free to commit adultery without mystical retribution. Thus while there are definite rights and obligations between husband and wife which can be enforced in the courts or are susceptible to the pressure of public opinion there are also in the critical situations of pregnancy and childbirth other mystical forces operating which unite the couple to a greater extent than at any other time. To a lesser extent the same principle operates when a woman menstruates. Her husband is in danger from her menstrual blood. She may not lie on the same mat with him and if he has a bed she must lie on the floor. If he has intercourse with her while she is menstruating he will contract an illness called *lugola* [34] whose symptoms are a very black face, nasal discharge, and continual feeling of cold. After death a man's widows are in danger of *mdulo* if they commit adultery during the first month of mourning.

We see then that the relationship between a man and his wife is partly defined in legal terms, with mutual duties and rights that are enforceable in the courts. This relationship is documentated and validated by the transfer of money and cattle from one group to the other and by the performance of the various marriage ceremonies. Because of the relationship between them, man and wife live together, sleep together, eat together and work together. But above all, together they produce and rear children. It is primarily because of these children that the kin of man and wife are concerned in the marriage relationship. It is during the long process of producing children that the two spouses are most closely associated with each other, and actions of the one in some mystical way directly and automatically influence the well-being of the other.

When a marriage grows out of flirtation between a young man and a young woman, there is at first sexual attraction between them. With the passage of time this may give place to a broader sentiment of mutual affection and respect. To this extent we may say that man and wife come to love each other. But whereas young men frequently discuss with other men the attraction they experience towards women, unmarried or married, they do not do this when they have settled down and begun to acquire prestige in the community. A man may quarrel with his wife in public, but he never expresses his affection for her, save in the intimacies of the hut. Men and women mourn their spouses with great lamentation at funerals, but while this may sometimes be the expression of a personal

[33] *Kutola mwana*. Cf. *kutenga mwana* among the Cewa.

[34] Cf. Read, op. cit., 'The moral code . . .', p. 19, where she describes a medicine called *ugola* with which men doctored their wives so that their lovers would die of a wasting sickness. Also cf. Zulu *ulugola*.

Women wear their cloth folded across the upper level of the breasts from right to left. Men and women often have two cloths, one over the loins, only the second fastening over the chest.

A menstruating woman also wears a small piece of calico corresponding to a diaper supported by string round the waist.[1] The same thing is worn after child-birth for six months. Angoni women always wear them.

The Angoni, Chipeta wear their cloth toga-fashion, carrying a fold of cloth on the left arm. An Angoni chief wears three such, blue, white and coloured, the first outside, the last next to the skin.

The material used is now practically everywhere European-made calico, formerly bark cloth only was used by Nyanja, though weaving had been accomplished by Angoni, where skins were and are used as articles of clothing.

There is nothing to distinguish men of various grades, etc. Fashion at the present time is very capricious—some patterned cloth being much worn one month will have no sale a month later; this is true both of men and of women.

There is no class uniform, and no "costumes" are worn save in dancing (*q.v.*).

Men are now seen wearing a piece of calico twisted up on the head in turban form, a custom lately introduced from the coast—the only indigenous head-gear is the string skull-cap worn by Angoni widows.

Under the heading of dress must be included the bead aprons worn by Yao and Angoni. Among the former the use of this garment is restricted to the women, who in the house sometimes wear nothing else; among the Angoni the children often have them and no other clothing.

Sandals are sometimes made of skin and fastened on the feet with a thong when crossing thorny country.

Among Angoni the *usende* only used to be worn; this is a small hard-coated fruit which was hollowed out and worn just covering the glans penis.

Food, etc.

The staple food throughout the country is either maize or rice, the latter only at various spots on the lake shore where it can be grown. Two fixed meals per diem are taken, at 9 or 10 a.m. and again at 6 p.m.; each consists of *nsima* porridge made from maize flour or rice flour or boiled rice with some *ndiwo* (relish) to which the salt is added. At odd times the native will eat anything that opportunity offers—a piece of cassava root, a boiled sweet potato, a roasted maize cob, etc.

The *nsima* is made by stirring flour (*ufa*) into boiling water till a stiff paste is formed; this is kept cooking for five minutes and then scraped out with a wooden

[1] Diaper or *nthiketo*: a woman keeps five or six; they are never put away in baskets but always hung up; a woman changes every time she bathes, using two or three per diem; they may be given to a female child to wear, but are then not worn again by a woman.